



Operating a bolt cutting machine at Todd Erie Basin.
(Library of Congress)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Women cutters at work. (Detroit Historical Museum
— Margaret Bourke-White)



Chippers at work in Marinship in Sausalito, CA, removing imperfections on steel plates. (National Archives)



Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. switched from manufacturing tires to fabricating blimp envelope in Akron, Ohio. (National Archives)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

African Americans were not readily accepted into the World War II Home Front workforce. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had to intervene.
(Richard Scurlock — Schomburg Center Collection)



Disputes over inadequate worker housing conditions were not uncommon.
Sojourner Truth Housing Project — Detroit, Michigan. (Library of Congress)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Afternoon shift change in 1942. The Richmond shipyards employed 90,000 workers to meet World War II production goals. (Oakland Museum of California — Dorothea Lange Collection)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Worker schoolchildren in 1942. Every hand raised signifies a child not born in California, which put a major strain on school services. (Oakland Museum of California — Dorothea Lange Collection)



(Poster: National Archives)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Temporary World War II Home Front worker housing in Richmond.
(Oakland Museum of California — Dorothea Lange Collection)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Shipyard worker housing. (Oakland Museum of California — Dorothea Lange Collection)

(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

Wartime housing was hastily constructed and varied in adequacy. (Oakland Museum — Dorothea Lange Collection)



(Photograph not included in this pdf version)

(Bettman Archive)



Library of Congress

Home Front adaptations included collection and recycling of strategic materials such as metal, paper, waste fat, nylon, silk, and rubber.



Richmond Shipyards #1, 2, 3, 4 (3A) and Ford Assembly Plant in full wartime production in December 12, 1942. (National Archives)



Former sites of Richmond Shipyard #2 (A), Ford Assembly Building (B), and Richmond Shipyard #3 (C) in 1981 still awaiting redevelopment. (National Archives)

ideally situated as a West Coast rail terminus on San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate opening to the Pacific Ocean.

During World War II, Richmond's population grew dramatically from 23,642 to over 100,000 attracting people from all over the country. By 1944, 27% of the Richmond Shipyards workforce of 90,000 were women, including over 41% of all welders and 24% of all craft employees. Another 10,000 workers, including commuters from other Bay Area cities and towns, worked in Richmond's 55 other war industries.

The jobs available at World War II Home Front industrial complexes attracted and actively recruited workers from across the country resulting in massive, mostly permanent population relocations. Many, who relocated from poor, rural places and marginal jobs such as sharecropping, were determined to stay on after World War II. The cities where the World War II industries mobilized were confronted with overwhelming demands on housing, transportation, community services, shopping, and infrastructure. To enable the 24-hour production, the largest companies, such as Kaiser, and the public sector cooperated to provide round the clock child care, food service, health care, and employee services.

Despite their best efforts, many workers often had to settle for marginal housing, long lines for purchases and lengthy commutes, in addition to the other Home Front sacrifices.

Working conditions on the Home Front could be difficult and dangerous and took a very high toll. A January 21, 1944 New York Times article cited: "Industrial casualties (women and men) between Pearl Harbor and January 1st of this year aggregated 37,500 killed, or 7,500 more than the military dead, 210,000 permanently disabled, and 4,500,000 temporarily disabled, or 60 times the number of military wounded and missing." While the ultimate United States casualty count on the Battle Front reached 295,000, the additional casualties on the Home Front represent the full price America paid to win the War.

For most Americans, the World War II Home Front experience also involved many day-to-day adjustments to support the War effort. These adaptations involved: collection and recycling of strategic materials such as metal, paper, waste fat, nylon, silk, and rubber. Twenty common commodities, including gasoline, sugar, coffee, shoes, butter, and meat, were carefully rationed. Tires, cars, bicycles, vacuum cleaners, waffle irons and flashlights had to last because they were no longer manufactured. People were asked to "Use it up / Wear it out / Make it do / or Do without." Victory gardens cropped up everywhere. Everyone bought war bonds. National parks were closed. Women replaced men in professional sports leagues, orchestras and many other tasks.

As World War II drew to a close, war-related industry jobs peaked in early 1945 and began to shut down as the last battles were fought. After the war, jobs for women and people of color diminished dramatically. Post-war jobs were largely reserved for

returning servicemen. Propaganda messages were re-phrased from telling women to come to work to advise them that their appropriate roles were now at home. While most assumed those who relocated to the Home Front industrial sites would return to where they came from, the majority of migrants were determined to stay.

Many of those who relocated to Richmond and other Bay Area locations for the World War II Home Front jobs tried to stay on in the wartime housing, and without employment, became the core of a low income, predominantly African American communities.

The Richmond Shipyards produced 747 Ocean (pre-Liberty), Liberty, Cargo Ship (pint-size Liberty), C4 Transports, Frigates, LSTs and Victory ships. These four shipyards constitute the largest World War II Shipyard operation in the U.S. Richmond also had 55 other wartime support industries and one of the nation's largest wartime housing program. The Ford Assembly Plant converted from automobile to tank production during the war, processing over 60,000 tanks plus a variety of other military vehicles. The World War II Home Front in Richmond was representative of other industrial centers that emerged specifically to support America's war effort. Many of those who worked in Richmond's industries are part of the community today.

RICHMOND'S ROSIE THE RIVETER MEMORIAL: HONORING AMERICAN WOMEN'S LABOR DURING WORLD WAR II

To commemorate these events and milestones, the City of Richmond earmarked the former site of Richmond Shipyard #2, in Marina Park, for a Rosie the Riveter Memorial: Honoring American Women's Labor During World War II.

The Memorial, designed by landscape architect Cheryl Barton and visual artist Susan Schwartzenberg, will be constructed and dedicated in fall 2000 primarily to honor American women's civilian labor during World War II. The memorial will be evocative of the 441-foot long Liberty ships built on the site and will interpret the national contribution of the six million women who labored on the World War II Home Front.

The City also established the Rosie the Riveter Memorial Committee, which is recording oral histories, publishing a Rosie the Riveter Newsletter, maintaining a web page, and an established database of over 200 of these women.

The shipyard survivors are enthusiastic about the memorial and anxious to see it completed. Addie Mae Guice, former shipyard worker, spoke for many when she said "I'm 83 years old now...I would appreciate it if you can check and find out that I was truly there and did my part to the end."

The Rosie the Riveter Memorial Committee has already received donations of photographs, hard hats, and other memorabilia. The Richmond Museum of History provides storage for a large portion of the Rosie the Riveter archival material.

THE ROSIE THE RIVETER MEMORIAL PROJECT

Richmond Shipyard welder in protective gear.
(Oakland Museum of California — Dorothea Lange Collection)



This 1943 poster created by J. Howard Miller for the Westinghouse Corporation has become the image most closely associated with Rosie the Riveter and Women in the World War II Home Front workforce.

(Photographs not included in this pdf version)

Emily Lester from Broken Arrow, OK was inspired to do an award winning history project on Rosie the Riveter in 1999.
(Private Photo)



Former site of Kaiser Shipyard #2 in June 1999 showing redevelopment. (Richmond Redevelopment Agency)

- Site for the Rosie the Riveter Memorial.
(Rendering of memorial shown) (Cheryl Barton Associates)
The alignment of the memorial points to the Golden Gate through which the completed ships embarked.
- ❶ and ❷ – See photos on opposite page.

The Rosie the Riveter Memorial was designed by Cheryl Barton and Susan Schwartzberg. Rendering is by Christopher Grubbs



❶ Marina Park site for the Rosie the Riveter Memorial. (Ray Murray)



❷ Marina Park site for the Rosie the Riveter Memorial (the play area will be relocated). (Ray Murray)

In addition, the Richmond Museum of History Museum Association is restoring the 455-foot S.S. Red Oak Victory Ship to preserve and use as a dockside museum. The Red Oak Victory was fabricated at Richmond Shipyard #1. The S.S. Red Oak is temporarily docked at Richmond Terminal 1 awaiting a permanent moorage more accessible to visitors.

There have been feature articles and a photo and museum exhibit on the Rosie the Riveter Memorial Project, and the network of women who worked in the shipyards is growing. The webpage has attracted national interest and inquiries, especially from students, researchers, and women who worked in the World War II Home Front workforce.

During the early discussions and site visits with the City of Richmond, it became obvious that there was a larger story to tell about the World War II Home Front given the scope and significance of the Richmond experience and the surviving structures. The National Park Service felt compelled to look beyond the Rosie the Riveter Memorial Park Site to explore the possibility of expanding the "affiliated area" to include theme-related sites along the Richmond shoreline that have significant features representative of the World War II Home Front, and to consider the feasibility and suitability of an alternative to establish a National Historical Park.

SIGNIFICANT INTERPRETIVE THEMES

There are a number of significant inter-related themes and sub themes including:

- Rosie the Riveter—Women in the World War II Home Front Workforce
- Integration of the World War II Home Front Workforce
- Resettlement to Support America's World War II Home Front Mobilization
- Unprecedented Industrial Mobilization and Production Efforts in Partnership with Government
- Industrial and Government Efforts to Provide Services For Workers
- Innovations in Employee Services
- Life on the World War II Home Front
- The Socio-economic Aftermath of the Post- World War II Industrial Closures
- Clean up and Adaptive Re-use of Former Home Front Brownfield Industrial Sites.

These themes fit within a number of the themes (designated by Roman numerals) and sub themes (designated by numbers) under the National Park Service's Thematic Framework:

Rosie the Riveter—Women in the World War II Workforce and Integration of the World War II Home Front Workforce were very significant chapters in the Womens Movement, African American History, and the Military Industrial Complex, and fit primarily within Theme V. Developing the American Economy — 1. extraction and production, 4.workers and work culture, 5. labor organizations and protests, and 7. governmental policies and practices.

Resettlement to Support America's World War II Home Front Mobilization fits within Theme I. Peopling Places — 3. migration from outside and within, 4. community and neighborhood, 6. encounters, conflicts, and colonization.

Unprecedented Industrial Mobilization and Production Efforts in Partnership with Government; Industrial and Government Efforts to Provide Services For Workers; and Innovations in Employee Services fit within Theme V. Developing the American Economy — 1. extraction and production, 4. workers and work culture, 5. labor organizations and protests, and 7. governmental policies and practices, Theme VI. Expanding Science and Technology — 1. experimentation and invention, 2. technological applications, and 4. effects on lifestyle and health. and Theme VII. Transforming the Environment, 2. adverse consequences and stresses on the environment.

Life on the World War II Home Front and The Socio-economic Aftermath of the Post-World War II Industrial Closures fit within Theme I. Peopling Places — 1. family and the life cycle, 2. health nutrition and disease, 4. community and neighborhood, Theme III. Expressing Cultural Values — 4. mass media, 6. popular and traditional culture, and, Theme IV Developing the American Economy — 1. extraction and production, 2. distribution and consumption, and 7. governmental policies and practices.

Clean up and Adaptive Re-use of Former Home Front Brownfield Industrial Sites fits within Theme IV Developing the American Economy — 1. extraction and production, 2. distribution and consumption, and 7. governmental policies and practices and Theme VII. Transforming the Environment, 2. adverse consequences and stresses on the environment, and, 3. protecting and preserving the environment.

These themes are multi-faceted and tell significant chapters in America's history during the World War II and post-war period.

Fragments of these stories are represented and interpreted at four existing national park units as chapters or sub-themes within the larger stories and spans of historical significance for those units. At the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston National Historic Park, destroyers were manufactured during World War II. They have Rosie the Riveter interpreters in period dress and present living history programs during Memorial Day and July 4th weekends. In contrast to the Richmond Shipyards, Charlestown Navy Yard was a military shipyard and the conditions including the labor union activity allowed was different than in the civilian yards. Also World War II was a 4-year window in a much longer history of 174 years interpreted at Charlestown Navy Yard. Springfield Armory NHS, where M-1 rifles and Browning Automatic Rifles were manufactured, has a teaching guide/video and audio tape on *From Her Arms to His - The Women Ordinance Workers of the Springfield Armory – World War II*. Lowell National Historic Park, where textile mills produced cloth for uniforms and parachutes, had a temporary exhibit on their Home Front experience and it is mentioned briefly in their Official National Park Handbook. Fort Vancouver National Reserve is adjacent to Kaiser's Vancouver Shipyard. The Reserve has an observation tower for viewing the

adjacent former shipyard site and interprets the site and the World War II workers in their visitor center and Reserve's orientation video. While the former shipyard contains original structures and facilities, it is a modern steel fabrication operation, outside the Reserve boundaries and currently off-limits to visitors. The National Liberty Ship Memorial, a 501(c)(3) organization, restored and manages the S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien Liberty Ship moored on the San Francisco waterfront. The O'Brien was fabricated in Portland, Maine. There is also a tie-in to Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial. The S.S. E.A. Bryan, built in Richmond, had just returned from its first trans-Pacific voyage, when it exploded in 1944 as munitions were being loaded in the worst stateside World War II disaster.

There is currently no unit in the National Park System that fully focuses on this important chapter in American history and tells it in full context. The National Park Service addressed and upgraded World War II-related sites for 50th anniversary commemorations. The World War II Home Front was identified as a significant theme, but it has not been adequately interpreted within the National Park System. Richmond is an appropriate place to fill that gap by interpreting the full breadth of the World War II Home Front experience. It can also serve as a focal point and hub to link other important related sites across the country. The National Park Service has sent a proposal to Congress requesting authorization to undertake a World War II Home Front Theme Study to survey additional sites, some of which may merit designation as additions to the National Park System or being linked to Richmond.

THEME-RELATED SITES IN RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

Today, Richmond has both remnant Home Front structures and sites that are still intact from the World War II period and have retained their historic integrity, and former Home Front industrial sites that have been converted to contemporary residential, recreational and commercial use with commemorative features. Theme-related sites in Richmond, CA, are depicted on Maps 2 and 3, and include the following:

- 1.) Richmond Shipyard #3 at Point Portrero on the west side of Harbor Channel — Five historic buildings (machine shop, general warehouse, sheet metal shop, first-aid station and cafeteria) and its five graving/dry docks are still intact. The dry dock basins and buildings are little changed from World War II. Richmond Shipyard #3 was designed and constructed by Henry J. Kaiser's Firm as a permanent shipyard, which is one reason it is still relatively intact. Most industrial sites including Shipyards #1 and #2 were constructed for temporary use during the War. Kaiser applied all the lessons he learned in shipbuilding at Shipyards #1 and #2. Shipyard #3 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance.
- 2.) The Ford Assembly Building (FAB) & Visitor/Education Center and the Oil House — The rehabilitation/adaptive reuse plan is in final negotiations. During World War II, this building was converted from an automobile to a tank production plant that processed